Dewan's reply.—I do not remember the circumstances under which the toll gate was shifted from Vazhur to its present position. Government do want revenue and the reason for shifting the toll gate was the expectation of the Government to get more revenue thereby. Tolls are, no doubt, a primitive method of making revenue, but sometimes it is unavoidable. The aspect of the matter which you now present to me was perhaps not known to the Chief Engineer who recommended the shifting. He now says that Kanjirapalli will be a far better place for the location of the toll gate. For the present year it must continue where it is. As to where it should be located next year, I shall make the necessary enquiry and decide.

92. The Quilon-Trivandrum Railway: its extension and improved working.

Mr. S. Ganapati Pillai (Member, Trading Classes, Trivandrum) stated that, though his friend, Mr. Adam Sait and he himself had been advocating the extension of the railway to the town of Trivandrum for the last five years, no action appeared to have been taken in the matter. In the Dewan's opening address, it was stated that arrangements were almost complete for the commencement of a reconnaissance survey for the extension of the railway from Trivandrum to Nagercoil and Government seemed to require the people to satisfy themselves that the extension of the railway to the town of Trivandrum would naturally follow when the extension of the line from Trivandrum to Nagercoil was taken up. The Member observed that the survey and the construction of the line to Nagercoil would take not less than seven or eight years, and that it would, in the meantime, be hard to ask the merchants and other inhabitants of Trivandrum to wait and continue to suffer all the difficulties which they now experienced on account of the location of the station three miles off. Further, no useful purpose was being served by the extension of the line to the pier; and if the money spent on that work had been utilised to connect Chalai, the grievances of the people would have been redressed long ago. The Member, therefore, requested that immediate steps be taken to extend the railway to the town of Trivandrum without waiting for the proposed extension of the line from Trivandrum to Nagercoil.

The Member represented further that arrangements be made—

(1) to supply good and new carriages for the Travancore Branch instead of the old and rotten ones which were being used at present;

(2) to provide big engines capable of carrying a larger number of carriages in the shuttle trains;

(3) to provide additional accommodation for passengers in the waiting sheds at the stations between Quilon and Trivandrum; and

(4) to supply drinking water to the passengers at the eight intermediate stations between Quilon and Trivandrum during hot weather, by giving effect to the orders already passed by the railway authorities in the matter.

Dewan's reply.—You have rightly guessed why the extension of the railway to the town has not yet been taken up. It has to wait till the line to Nagercoil is surveyed. I do not think that this survey will take 7 or 8 years. The survey may be expected to be finished in about 10 months. Afterwards we shall have to settle the question of finance. I think you can confidently expect the execution of the work in a couple of years. Supposing that the line to Nagercoil has to take a different alignment, all the money spent on this extension to the town, if it is done immediately, will be a waste. You will, therefore, have to wait patiently for a year or two more. The extension to the town will become part and parcel of the Nagercoil line.

In regard to the rolling stock, that is an oft-recurring complaint. The rolling stock of the Shencottah-Trivandrum Section is not a water-tight compartment like that of the Shoranur-Cochin railway, which is an isolated line. So far as the Shencottah-Trivandrum Section is concerned, we share both the advantages and the disadvantages of its being part of a big railway system. We have sanctioned some money for additional rolling stock and this stock will shortly arrive. Then the complaint will, I trust, be not so great.

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As regards additional accommodation at some of the railway stations, I have brought the matter to the notice of the railway authorities already, and, as a result, they have submitted an estimate for the extension of the Varkalai Station, to start with, for about Rs. 10,000. The estimate makes provision for a goods-shed, which does not exist now, a waiting shed, etc. All these will, however, go to add to the capital cost of the line and the more money you sink on the line, the less will be the return.

I am sorry to say that no arrangements have yet been made by the railway authorities for the distribution of drinking water at the various stations. I shall write to them again.

93. Some suggestions for improving the means of communication in North Travancore.

Mr. V. J. Joseph B. A., B. L. (Member, Nominated) said that the railway policy of Government was laid down in the Dewan's opening address to the last session of the Assembly and that it gave the people of north and central Travancore great hopes, since it was recognised therein that those parts of the State stood in need of roads and that the country was in equal need of railway connection on either side *i. e*, with the Travancore and Cochin lines. The proposal made was that the railway extension to north Travancore should proceed from a point near Kundara or Kottarakara in the Quilon-Shencottah line and join Ernakulam. It was also said in that address that railway connection to Nagercoil was also under consideration. But this year's address had considerably disappointed the people of north and central Travancore in the matter of railway connection. For, this year's address contained an announcement that the extension of train service to north and central Travancore would be taken in hand only after the question of Travancore's share in the Cochin Harbour Scheme was settled, while the survey of a line from Trivandrum to Nagercoil was to be immediately taken up. That announcement had caused considerable heart-burning among the people in the northern and central portions of Travancore. He was not prepared to say that railway extension to north and central Travancore had nothing to do with the question of the Cochin Harbour. On the other hand, the Cochin Harbour Scheme was a very important matter. Apart from that, he submitted that, in view of the long-standing complaint of want of means of communication in north and central Travancore, they attached much importance to any scheme which would facilitate locomotion. It was on that account that they laid greater stress on the railway scheme which, it was stated, would open up the country. Further, the commercial and business activities of the tract of country in question were so vast that the development of the material resources of the State was no small factor in a consideration of the question of means of transport. It was well known that 70 per cent of the trade of the State passed to the Cochin port. All the hill produce from the Devicolam District found its way to Cochin. It was very doubtful whether south Travancore has such facilities and natural advantages. All the exports from the south passed through Tuticorin and Travancore was not a gainer in any way. The Marine Department was at present working at a loss of Rs. 3,000 a year. The Member was sure that, if only their part of the country was opened up, it would result in a distinct gain to Government. He, therefore, requested that the question of railway extension in north and central Travancore should not be kept in the back-ground till the Cochin Harbour Scheme was brought to fruition and that an immediate survey of a line from Kottarakara or Kundara to Ernakulam right through the country be undertaken. Another matter of grievance was that generally the allotment began from the south and, by the time they reached Parur, the purse had become slender. So, the system of beginning from the south which had been responsible for a good deal of difficulties for them in several ways should be stopped. So far as they were concerned, they had only one road for 150 miles, while in the south they had many roads and were now going to have a railway into the bargain. If that line was to be taken up now, it would certainly not be possible for Government to comply with their request, for it was impossible for Government to undertake such schemes all at once and push them on to completion at the same time. Hence he prayed that their request should be

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